**Kirtland Bird Club**

**January 8, 2020 – Meeting Minutes**

**Opening (Patty Kellner)**

President Patty Kellner called the meeting to order at 7:00 PM. There were 71 people were present, including Andy Jones, the evening’s speaker. Guests included Laura Dempsey, Ethan Kistler from Newton Falls, OH, Billi Krochuk from Burlington, Ontario, a group from Black River Audubon Society – Lorene Brown, Sandy Burris, Pat Krebs and Sheryl Young. In addition there was a member of Blackbrook Audubon Society who announced their next meeting on January 21 at Holden Arboretum and next field trip on January 25 to Geauga County, details at <http://blackbrookaudubon.org/events.html>.

President Kellner recognized Lukas Padegimas, KBC member and former KBC president, who was returning after two years on Chuuk in the Federated States of Micronesia. She welcomed Tim Colborn, new President of the Ohio Ornithological Society’s Board of Directors.

 **Recording Secretary’s Report (Patty Kellner)**

The minutes of the December 2019 meeting were posted on the KBC website, after review and correction by the Board. A motion to accept them was made and approved. President Kellner reminded members to submit corrections in advance of each meeting. In addition, she introduced Toby Briskin as tonight’s recording secretary.

**Treasurer’s Report (Mary Anne Romito)**

Mary Ann Romito reported that 60 members paid their annual dues, with 86 lapsed memberships. She encouraged unpaid members to pay their dues as soon as possible. Single $20.00 and a couple $30.00.

**Other Announcements**

Before each meeting, please share your recent bird sightings by writing them on the blackboard at the front of the meeting room.

Andy Jones introduced co-worker and KBC member Debbie Day. She said that the Cleveland Museum of Natural History is evaluating the current parking situation for affiliated societies and organizations that meet at the museum because a uniform policy is needed. That information will be shared as soon as it’s available.

Steve Cagan, KBC member, will have a photo exhibit at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes, January 17-March 31. The artist’s reception is on Thursday, January 23, 2020, 5:30-7:30 PM.

On Sunday, January 12, 2020, at 8:00 AM there is a bird walk at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes.

**Field Trip Reports (Andy Jones & Paula Lozano)**

Andy Jones gave a preliminary report on the 2019 Cleveland Christmas Bird Calendar held on Saturday, December 21, 2019. 75 species were reported, as well as 5 additional Count Week species.

On Sunday, January 26, 2020, there will be a joint field trip with Western Cuyahoga Audubon Society. It starts at 9:00 AM at Merwin’s Wharf/Rivergate Park in the Flats, 1785 Merwin Avenue, Cleveland. Erik Bruder will be the WCAS field trip leader. Please park in the area closest to the skate park. Details at: <https://www.wcaudubon.org/news-blog/western-cuyahoga-audubon-society-field-trip-to-rivergate-park-merwins-wharf-sunday-january-26-2020>

On Saturday, February 15, 2020, there will be a joint field trip with Black River Audubon Society, starting at 9:00 AM at the Duck Pond, Castalia, OH. Meet at the parking area on the north side of the Duck Pond at the intersection of OH-SR 101 and Lowell Street. Paul Sherwood is the BRAS field trip leader. Details at: <https://ohiobirds.org/birding-at-castalia-pond/>

**Update on the Future of the Kirtland Bird Club (Patricia Kellner, Stephen Sadam)**

President Kellner introduced Stephen Sedam, the consultant hired by the club to address the future of the Kirtland Bird Club issue. She noted that he spent fourteen years as the executive director of the Ohio Environmental Council, worked for almost as long with the National Audubon Society, and worked in membership and finances at the Nature Center at Shaker Lakes and in fundraising at Holden Arboretum.

Mr. Sedam presented an outline of his plan that will cover the Kirtland Bird Club’s mission and vision, activities, leadership and membership. It includes three planning sessions that are open to all KBC members and interested birders, as well as surveys and telephone interviews. Summaries of each planning session will be presented at regular KBC meetings.

The first meeting will be on Saturday, January 25, 2020, starting at 10:00 AM, with the location to be determined. Members are asked to sign-up to attend the meeting or help in another way to chart the future of the club.

**Speaker (Andy Jones - Ornithology Updates & Discoveries in 2019)**

Andy Jones started his annual presentation with a short review of the 2019 Cleveland Christmas Bird Count. With some records still to be turned in, there were 75 species, which was near the 50-year average of 76 species, with 5 additional species during Count Week, three days before and three days after December 28, 2019. He noted that there was a low count of Red-breasted Mergansers.

Andy mentioned the arrival of two birds into the museum’s live bird collection, an Eastern Screech-Owl and a tame Wood Duck. Many specimens from the Cleveland Lights Out Program were processed and added to the museum’s collection. He said that other changes coming to the CMNH include the renovation of the Smith Courtyard and the Murch Auditorium and a changing gallery space for recent discoveries.

Andy reported that Cleveland’s Lights Out program has now accumulated data on 7500 collisions over five seasons. Volunteers scoured downtown Cleveland areas, transporting live, injured birds to be rehabbed at the Lake Erie Nature and Science Center in Bay Village, with the Carnegie Museum following rehabbed birds. The remaining dead birds went to the Cleveland Museum of Natural History to be processed as specimens for their collection.

Andy said that cities on the shores of the Great Lakes noted large numbers of bird collisions of thrushes and warblers but fewer collisions by vireos and flycatchers. Andy speculated that the difference between the high and low colliders may be related to nocturnal flight calls. Low colliders did not give nocturnal flight calls. He asked, “Are these flight calls some sort of communication of problems, then other of these species come in it investigate?”

In 2019 twenty buildings turned off their lights at night during spring and fall migrations. The first building to volunteer to participate in the program was the Cleveland Brown Stadium, and their building manager was working with other stadiums to do the same. Huntington Bank was participating too. Cleveland State University’s Marshall Law building installed new windows that have reduced the number of bird collisions. Lights Out’s hope is to have all new builds have to meet low collision standards.

In June the CMNH’s Andy Jones and Courtney joined Ben Winger of the University of Michigan on a three week joint expedition to Manitoba, the twelfth year of their collaboration to document the condition of boreal forests and their flora and fauna. Two snowy owls wings were found in the forest. The audience enjoyed Andy’s report, with photos of the research crew, fairy orchids, grouse droppings, above average temperatures, and accounts of hordes of black flies, mosquitoes and ticks. This summer’s research will be in Maine, Nova Scotia and Newfoundland.

Andy reported that the good news in taxonomy from the American Ornithological Union was that there weren’t any changes in the list of Ohio birds, none lost or gained in the last two years. The decision to eliminate apostrophes in birds’ names was not passed. There were three proposed name changes. The first was Olive warbler, which is not olive or a warbler, to Ocotero. Another proposed change was to split Royal tern into two species, one for the old world and the other for the new world. A proposal to recognize Mexican duck based on DNA differences was another one. Finally, there was a proposal to recognize great white heron as a species.

Andy collaborated with Courtney Brennan, Collections Manager of Zoology, on various projects. The museum’s research collection grew to over 40,000 specimens and was utilized by outside researcher in a variety of research projects – samples requested included birds’ toenails, eyeballs to look for ectoparasites. Andy, Courtney and Ryan Trimbath, a ranger in the Cuyahoga Valley National Park, used mitochondrial DNA sequencing to identify an unusual hybrid warbler’s matrilineal ancestry and nuclear DNA MUSK gene sequencing to confirm the patrilineal ancestry. The mother was a cerulean and the father was a parula, suggesting possible changes in species numbers and breeding territories. Another unusual bird, found in Lorain County by Ethan Kistler, was a sparrow that sounded like a clay-colored and appeared to be an intermediate with a field sparrow. Again, mitochondrial DNA and nuclear DNA sequencing determined that the mother was a clay-colored and the father a field sparrow. More hybrid evaluations are pending.

Max Kirsch, an intern sponsored by the CMNH’s Kirtlandia Society with a $4000 grant, did a project with white-throated sparrows that were collected by Lights Out. Of the 545 birds collected in the fall of 2017, 359 were dead and 186 were banded and released. The survival rate of adults was better than immatures perhaps because adult skulls are more ossified than skulls of juveniles. Using data Max collected, he and Andy found that neither wing length nor the timing of migration had any relation to collisions. Lighter-weight birds survived better than heavier birds. Ectoparasites were identified with special equipment, and immature birds were more likely to be parasitized than adults. Two interns will be hired for the 2020 nesting season to assist with research.

Andy discussed findings about the migration of red-tailed hawks in southern California. Using solar trackers, it was noted that the tracked birds nested in the winter and migrated north in the summer, thought to be facultative migration due to dry summers.

There was a final, short report about methods of tracking birds. Medium-sized birds like upland sandpiper can be tracked with battery-operated backpacks. For tracking smaller birds like the blackpoll warbler, geolocators are placed on the birds’ backs and calibrated for day length. Using information retrieved from recapturing those birds it was determined that many take Great Circle routes, some flying 72 hours non-stop over water.

**Closing and Adjournment**

President Patty thanked our speaker, everyone who came the meeting, counted birds on the Christmas Bird and posted sightings tonight. Toby Briskin was thanked for taking the minutes, too.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, February 5, 2020, in Classroom B. Laura Gooch is presenting a program about the on-going surveys at the Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve. In the future Lukas Padegimas will present a program on the birdlife of the Federated States of Micronesia and Fred Losi a program about the birds of southeast Cleveland area.

The meeting adjourned at 8:35 PM.

Addendum/corrections by Patty Kellner: Lukas Padegimas will present a program on the birdlife in the Federated States of Micronesia at the February KBC meeting and Laura Gooch will present a program on multiple years of surveys at Cleveland Lakefront Nature Preserve. Fred Losi’s engagement is still pending.